

## Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-19 NEA-10 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02

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SAM-01 SCI-06 STR-08 TRSE-00 CU-04 NIC-01 OIC-04

DRC-01 /236 W

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R 261800Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 604

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

USMISSION GENEVA

USUN NEW YORK 993

DIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, BE

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT PROGRAM STATEMENT ON FOREIGN AND DEFENSE  
AFFAIRS

1. SUMMARY. THE INCOMING SOCIAL CHRISTIAN- LIBERAL GOVERNMENT OF LEO TINDEMANS HAS RELEASED A POLICY PROGRAM STATEMENT PUBLISHED IN THE LOCAL PRESS ON APRIL 24. DOMESTIC AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS WILL BE REPORTED SEPARATELY. THE FOREIGN POLICY SECTION CONCENTRATES CHIEFLY ON THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE EC AND ACHIEVE ITS MAJOR GOALS OF EUROPEAN UNION AND INTEGRATION. IT EXPRESSES CAUTIOUS SYMPATHY FOR THE UK'S PROBLEMS AND CALLS FOR REGULAR AND CONFIDENTIAL US-EC CONSULTATIONS. CONTINUING LOYALTY TO NATO IS PLEDGED AS BELGIUM SEEKS DETENTE IN CSCE AND MBFR. PROGRAM SUPPORTS LIBERATION OF AFRICANS STILL DEPENDENT AND THE APPLICATION OF DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES BY ALL NATO MEMBERS. THIRD WORLD GETS NOD, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS, AS DO FORMER AFRICAN COLONIES. ON DEFENSE, FOUR PERCENT BUDGET INCREASE WILL BE MAINTAINED, AS WILL PLAN FOR A PHASED PROFESSIONALIZATION OF THE ARMY. FOLLOWING ARE THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF THE STATEMENT. AND SUMMARY.

2. THE CENTERPIECE OF FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE AN EFFORT TO RE-ESTABLISH CONFIDENCE AND COOPERATION AMONG THE NINE AND BRING TO FULFILLMENT ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION AND EUROPEAN UNIFICATION. AS LONG AS THE TREATIES ARE RESPECTED AND INTEGRATION PROCEEDS APACE, BELGIUM WILL SEEK SOLUTIONS TO SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF EC MEMBERS, THE UK IN PARTICULAR. BELGIUM WILL SUPPORT A COMMON EC ENERGY POLICY AND THE ELIMINATION OF REGIONAL IMBALANCES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. EC SOLIDARITY ON EXTERNAL MATTERS AND RELATIONSHIPS IS ESSENTIAL. AS THE NINE PROCEED TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE ON WORLD AFFAIRS, THEY MUST TAKE THEIR ALLIES' INTERESTS INTO ACCOUNT THROUGH REGULAR AND CONFIDENTIAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THEM, PARTICULARLY THE US.

3. THE GOVERNMENT WILL PURSUE POLICIES OF PEACE, DETENTE AND SECURITY, REALIZING THAT NATO PROVIDES THE SECURITY  
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UPON WHICH DETENTE DEPENDS. CSCE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO LASTING DETENTE, ESPECIALLY IF THERE IS PROGRESS ON HUMAN CONTACTS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION, AND BELGIUM WILL WORK FOR ITS SUCCESS AND THAT OF MBFR.

4. THE GOVERNMENT WILL LEND ITS VOICE TO THE GOAL OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE FOR AFRICAN PEOPLES STILL DEPRIVED OF THESE ASSETS. THE ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS CRISES

DEMONSTRATE THE NEED TO REMEDY THE BASIC IMBALANCE BETWEEN PEOPLES AND CONTINENTS, AND BELGIUM WILL SUPPORT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MORE STABLE RELATIONS THAT PROTECT THE INTERESTS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. BELGIUM WILL CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WITH ZAIRE, XURUNDI AND RWANDA UNDER EXISTING AGREEMENTS.

5. THE PROGRAM PLEDGES LOYALTY TO NATO COMMITMENTS AND A FOUR PERCENT ANNUAL INCREASE IN THE DEFENSE BUDGET, AND CALLS FOR ADHERENCE TO DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES IN NATO. THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S DEFENSE REFORM PROGRAM, ENVISAGING A SEMI-PROFESSIONAL ARMY, IS ADOPTED. THE ARMED FORCES WILL NOT NORMALLY BE EMPLOYED IN MAINTAINING PUBLIC ORDER IN PEACETIME.

A. NATO DEFENSE COMMITMENTS WILL BE MET AND NATO MEMBERSHIP MAINTAINED.

B. BELGIUM WILL FAVOR CLOSER COOPERATION AMONG THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES AND THE APPLICATION OF DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES BY ALL MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE, IN CONFORMITY WITH THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY.

C. THE DEFENSE BUDGET WILL BE INCREASED BY FOUR PERCENT ANNUALLY IN REAL TERMS.

D. THE MAJOR LINES OF THE DEFENSE REFORM PROPOSAL APPROVED BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT ARE ADOPTED BY THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THIS CALLS FOR THE PHASED REDUCTION IN CONSCRIPT SERVICE TIME TO SIX MONTHS BY 1978, THE PACE TO BE A FUNCTION OF SUCCESS IN RECRUITING SUFFICIENT NUMBERS OF SHORT-TERM (2 TO 11 YEARS) VOLUNTEERS. THE COST OF THIS PROGRAM, AVERAGING 850 MILLION BELGIAN FRANCS A YEAR, WILL NOT FALL ON THE REGULAR BUDGET OR HAVE ANY BEARING ON THE ANNUAL FOUR PERCENT INCREASE IN THE REGULAR BUDGET.

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E. THE GOVERNMENT WILL SEEK TO CHANGE EXISTING LAWS SO AS TO MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE IN PEACETIME TO REQUISITION THE ARMED FORCES FOR PURPOSES OF MAINTAINING INTERNAL ORDER EXCEPT BY DECISION OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.  
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## Message Attributes

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